



FORUM

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AREAWIDE HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PLAN ENDORSED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

After over one year of work involving intensive intergovernmental coordination with several local governments and County agencies, the Area Planning Board of Palm Beach County has submitted to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) a locally supported Areawide Housing Opportunity Plan.

An Areawide Housing Opportunity Plan for Palm Beach County has been endorsed by 26 of the 38 local jurisdictions within the County. This endorsement came in the form of resolutions supporting the Plan and its proposed goals and objectives. The local governments which have passed such a resolution are listed in TABLE I. These endorsements have allowed the Area Planning Board to become the first Areawide Planning Organization in Florida to submit a locally supported Areawide Housing Opportunity Plan to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

TABLE I
JURISDICTIONS SUPPORTING THE AREAWIDE
HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PLAN FOR
PALM BEACH COUNTY

Atlantis	Lake Worth
Belle Glade	Lantana
Boca Raton	Mangonia Park
Boynton Beach	Pahokee
Cloud Lake	Palm Beach County
Delray Beach	Palm Beach Gardens
Greenacres City	Palm Beach Shores
Gulf Stream	Palm Springs
Highland Beach	Riviera Beach
Juno Beach	South Bay
Jupiter Inlet Colony	South Palm Beach
Lake Clarke Shores	Tequesta
Lake Park	West Palm Beach

PLAN COORDINATES HOUSING PROGRAMS

An Areawide Housing Opportunity Plan (AHOP) basically provides a comprehensive areawide strategy for the improvement of housing opportunities for lower-income groups within Palm Beach County. The term "lower-income" is used to refer to those families and/or individuals who are recognized by HUD as having the most difficulties in obtaining adequate housing. These include families who in 1979 made less than \$13,600; minorities; the handicapped; low-income elderly; and female-headed households. The AHOP was promulgated in recognition of the lower-income housing situation within Palm Beach County as an areawide issue which transcends local political boundaries and which needs to be addressed from an areawide perspective. The Plan provides an opportunity for all local governments within Palm Beach County to help alleviate areawide housing problems through cooperation and participation in the achievement of the goal of safe, sound, and affordable housing for all the County's residents.

The AHOP is a statement of areawide housing needs, goals and objectives to meet those needs, and proposed implementation strategies to achieve stated goals and objectives. The Plan basically contains an areawide assessment of the housing assistance need of lower-income households within Palm Beach County. The AHOP also shows the housing assistance need of each local government over 25,000 population. The housing assistance need statements within the AHOP are based on local government estimates of local housing need which appear within each of their respective Housing Assistance Plans. These jurisdictions over 25,000 population are termed "participating" in the AHOP and include Boca Raton, Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Lake Worth, Palm Beach County, Riviera Beach, and West Palm Beach. The AHOP presents a distribution procedure which will be used by HUD

as a general guideline in the allocation of housing assistance funds within the Plan area. The AHOP also delineates annual and 3-year goals for each participating jurisdiction and lists activities for plan implementation.

The history of the development of the AHOP documents the potential of intergovernmental coordination for the achievement of a common goal. The Area Planning Board began to investigate the possibility of developing an AHOP in April, 1978. However, the project was not formally pursued until November 1978, when the County Administrator requested that the Area Planning Board, in conjunction with the County's Division of Housing and Community Development, develop an AHOP. In December 1978, the Area Planning Board authorized staff to seek funding from HUD to prepare an AHOP. This was accomplished and a draft Plan finalized in June of 1979. The draft AHOP was transmitted to the staffs of the participating jurisdictions and the HUD Regional and Area Offices in June 1979. Comments received from these agencies were evaluated and the AHOP was revised. On August 8, 1979, a final meeting of the technical staffs involved was held and the AHOP finalized. The Area Planning Board of Palm Beach County unanimously adopted the AHOP on August 15, 1979, and instructed staff to seek endorsement for the Plan from the County's jurisdictions. As noted previously, staff has been able to secure endorsing resolutions from 26 local jurisdictions.

POTENTIAL INCREASE IN FUNDING

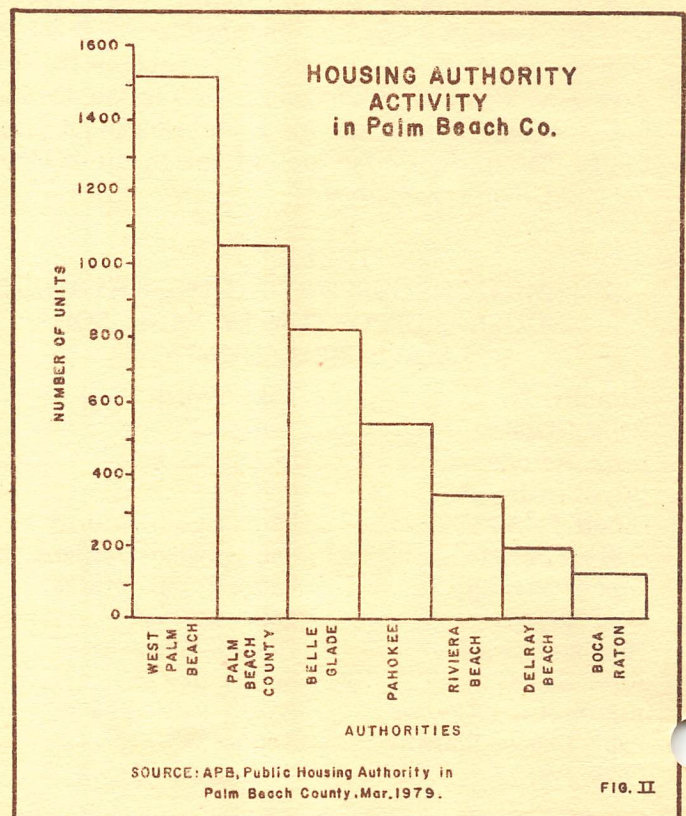
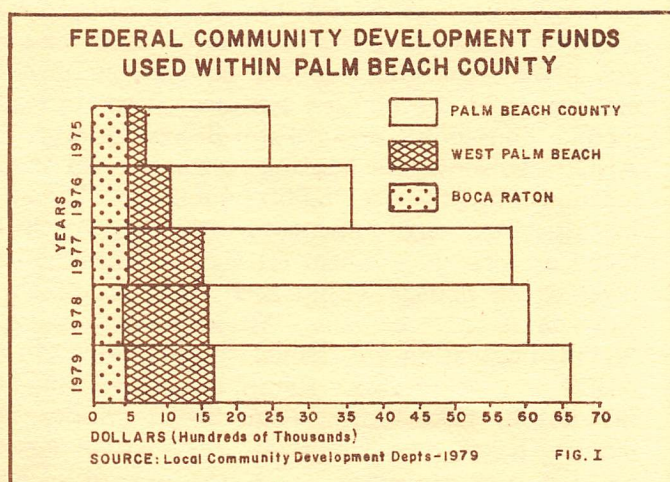
When HUD approves the AHOP, the Area Planning Board will be one of only 23 areawide planning organizations nationwide which have a HUD approved plan. Approval of the Plan will make the County eligible for approximately \$20 million in additional Community Development Block Grant funds; \$800,000 in incentive comprehensive planning funds, and a potential \$30 million in Section 8 Housing

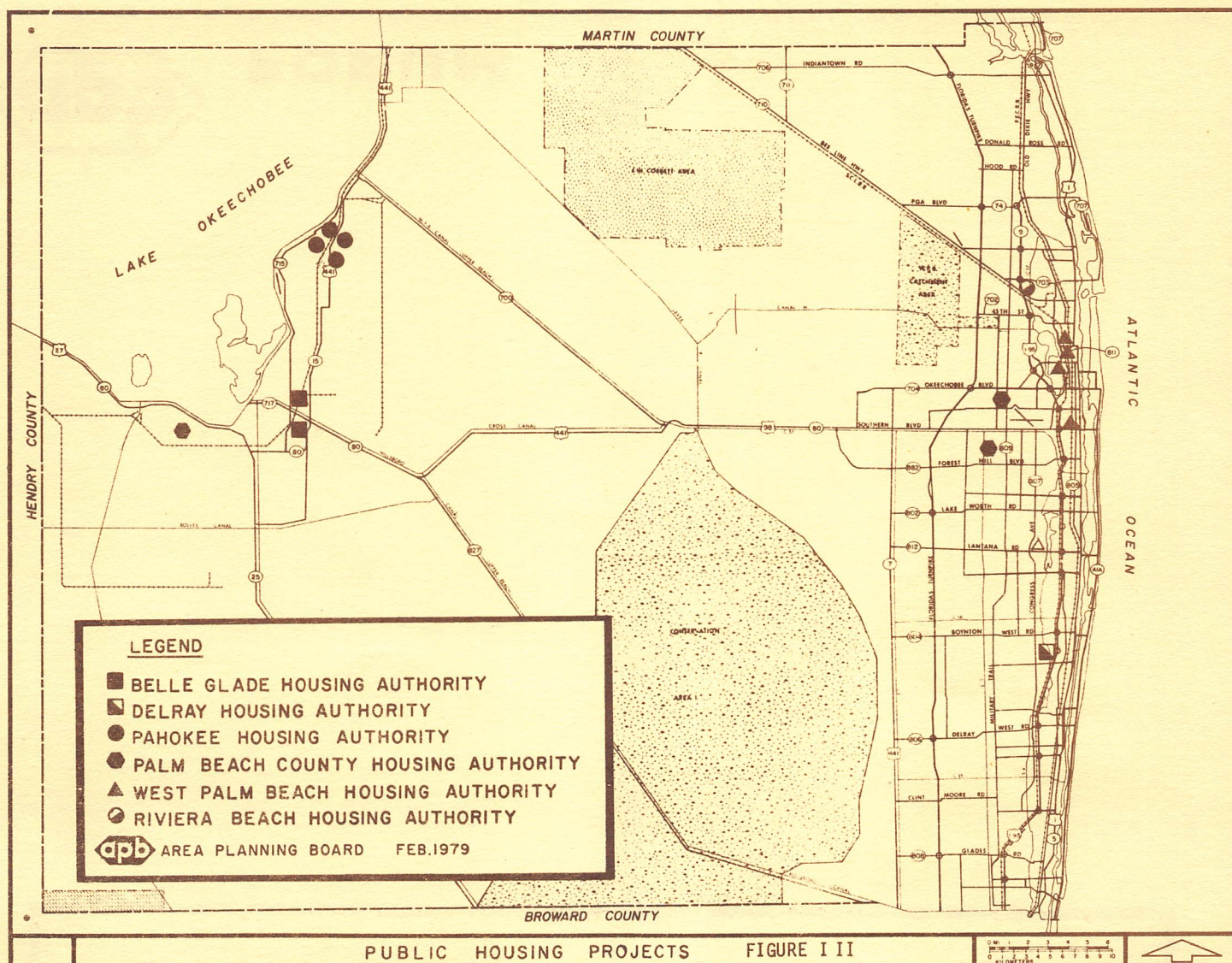
Assistance revenues. These funds will be distributed by HUD nationwide on a competitive basis. The County has applied for \$2.5 million of the above noted Community Development Block Grant funds and \$25,000 of the comprehensive planning funds. If awarded by HUD, these funds should be available prior to the beginning of 1980.

Since 1975, the County has been the recipient of over \$24 million in Community Development Block Grant funds. These funds have gone to Boca Raton and West Palm Beach, and to Palm Beach County with its 26 participating local governments, under various funding categories in the Community Development Block Grant program. The only other eligible recipient of Community Development Block Grant funds, the City of Belle Glade, has also received substantial monies from HUD. FIGURE I shows that federal housing funding coming into the County has steadily increased from the program's beginning in 1975. Since 1975, these funds have increased some 163 percent for the total County.

PUBLIC HOUSING EXAMINED

The Area Planning Board is developing a study on the delivery of public housing within Palm Beach County. The study, entitled Alternative Strategies in the Delivery of Public Housing, is funded in part by a planning grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The major purpose of the study is to investigate the current public housing delivery system operating within Palm Beach County and to analyze alternative mech-





anisms, which do exist or could exist, for the purposes of addressing public housing as an areawide issue.

Presently, the delivery of public housing is accomplished through the efforts of the seven (7) housing authorities operating within Palm Beach County. These authorities and the number of subsidized dwelling units they operate are depicted in FIGURE II. Each housing authority operates, with minor exceptions, within the jurisdictional boundaries of the local government which created it. FIGURE III shows the location of the various projects of each authority. This situation suggests that housing problems are being dealt with solely on a local basis.

Recently, there has been a growing national awareness that many problems, including housing, are areawide issues. This study will investigate alternative mechanisms to the delivery of public housing which address housing on an areawide basis. More specifically, the study is interested in exploring the extent to which alternative areawide approaches encourage economies or diseconomies of scale relative to administrative costs, maintenance costs, provision of tenant services, and program subsidies to tenants. Additionally, the

study also examines the ability of such mechanisms to facilitate a broader geographic choice of housing opportunities to lower-income households.

The report presents a brief historical overview of the development of the federal public housing program. This overview includes a discussion of major trends in the evolution of housing legislation from the 1930s until the present day. The origin and development of local housing authorities are also presented. The report then analyzes each housing authority operating within Palm Beach County utilizing HUD and other nationally accepted criteria. The entire public housing delivery system is then assessed for its ability to address housing as an areawide issue. Finally, the report presents alternative models for the delivery of public housing from an areawide perspective and recommendations for Palm Beach County's existing housing delivery system.

The study is projected to be available in December 1979. The report is one of the first to focus on a subject which has been historically given limited attention in Palm Beach County: public housing, its short-comings and its achievements.

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